

Message Text

SECRET

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22

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-11 DHA-02 AID-05 OMB-01 /084 W

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P R 210900Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE PRIORITY 8248

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 2162

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT ET

SUBJ: EMBASSY COMMENTS ON LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

REF: ADDIS ABABA'S 2158 (DTG 201822 FEB 76)

WE HAVE BEEN STRUGGLING TO MAKE SENSE OF RECENT EVENTS HERE, BUT FIND GENERALIZATIONS ARE DIFFICULT. ONE CAN HEAR WIDE GAMUT OF EXPLANATIONS. WITH SOME HESITATION WE INCLINE TOWARDS FOLLOWING.

(1) LEFT-RADICAL AND PRO-SOVIET WING OF DIRG HAS SEIZED INITIATIVE.

(2) ARRESTEES ARE USUALLY FROM WEALTHY FAMILIES, NON RADICAL, AND SOME ARE CONSERVATIVES. (3) ONLY SENSIBLE EXPLANATION FOR ARRESTS OF MANY WOMEN INCLUDING WIDOWS OF FORMER FIGURES MAYBE AS WARNING TO OTHER CONSERVATIVES TO FALL IN LINE WITH REVOLUTION AND NOT TO SKIP COUNTRY LEAVING FAMILIES BEHIND.

(4) OAU MINISTERIAL MEETING BEGINS IN TWO DAYS AND SOME SOURCES ASSERT THAT ALL OR NEARLY ALL THOSE ARRESTED WILL BE FREED BEFORE

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MEETING BRINGS FOREIGN DIGNITARIES AND NEWMEN TO TOWN. (5)

IF THEY ARE INDEED FREED IN NEXT FEW DAYS WE WOULD BE STRENGTHENED
IN OUR SURMISE THAT ONE ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF ARRESTS WAS TO
INITIMIDATE AND GIVE SHARP WARNING TO "REACTIONARY" ELEMENTS
TO SUPPORT GOVT POLICIES OR ELSE. (6) ANOTHER PURPOSE MAY BE
COMBINATION OF DEMONSTRATION OF STRENGTH BY MENGHISTU AND
RADICALS IN DIRG, AND THEIR BID FOR SUPPORT FROM OTHER DISAFFECTED
RADICAL ELEMENTS AMONG STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND TRADE UNIONISTS
WHO HAVE CRITICIZED GOVT FOR NOT BEING RADICAL ENOUGH.
HUMMEL

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NNN

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